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(54) PIZZA PAN

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No. OF CLAIMS 2

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A planar tray for use in cooking pizza including a pair of concentric metal rings, which are interconnected by radially extending openings so that the bottom of the pizza can cook uniformly with the top and side edges thereof.

This invention relates to a cooking tray, and in particular to a tray for cooking pizza.

Almost invariably, pizza is cooked on a flat, circular tray with a slightly raised outer edge. The use of such a tray usually results in pizza which is cooked on the top and side edges, but undercooked on the bottom. If the pizza is cooked long enough or at a sufficiently high temperature to brown the bottom surface, the top surface and side edges are overdone.

A variety of baking pans and pizza cooking trays have been proposed. Examples of such articles are found in U.S. Patents Nos. 1,781,302, issued to C.P. Roberts on November 11, 1930; 2,123,359, issued to E. Hallmark on July 12, 1938; 3,347,181, issued to C. Pizzo on October 17, 1967; 3,410,700, issued to J.A. Christopher on November 19, 1968. The pans described in these patents include a base defined by one or more layers of material containing perforations, or, in the case of the Hallmark patent, radially extending slots.

While the patented pans at least partially solve the problem of ensuring that the bottom surface of the pizza is cooked, they do not offer a complete solution to the problem. At best, the openings in the pan bottoms occupy a minor portion, i.e. much less than one-half of area of the pan bottom.

The object of the present invention is to provide a solution to the above problem.

Accordingly, the present invention relates to a tray for use in pizza cooking comprising an outer rim defining the outer periphery of the tray; an inner rim completely within and spaced apart from said outer rim and a plurality of spokes extending between and interconnecting said inner and outer

rims, the inner and outer rims and spokes being substantially planar, and having dimensions such that the tray is predominantly open from top to bottom to facilitate cooking of the pizza bottom.

The invention will now be described in greater detail with reference to the accompanying drawing, which illustrates a preferred embodiment of the invention, and wherein:

Figure 1 is a perspective view from above of a tray for cooking pizza in accordance with the present invention;

Figure 2 is a plan view of the tray of Fig. 1; and

Figure 3 is a cross-sectional view taken generally along line III-III of Fig. 2.

With reference to the drawing, a pizza tray in accordance with the present invention includes an outer annular rim 1, having a beaded outer top edge 2 for retaining a pizza on the tray during cooking. An annular inner rim 3 is provided completely within the outer rim 1, and is connected thereto by radially extending spokes 4. The spokes 4 are spaced equidistant apart around the circles defined by the inner and outer rims. The inner rim 3 defines a large circular central opening 5, and the outer and inner rims 1 and 3 and the spokes 4 define large outer openings 6.

As shown in Fig. 3, the inner and outer rims 1 and 3, respectively, and the spokes 4 are substantially planar to define a flat tray. The rims and spokes are integral with each other, being formed in one piece with a metal such as cast iron or steel. Of course, other metals can be used. The tray can be formed, e.g. by casting or stamping. It is also possible to use steel wires for the rings and/or spokes.

While the tray shown in the drawings is circular with

radially extending spokes, it will be appreciated that the tray can be rectangular or any other shape. The dimensions of the tray can be varied - pizzas normally being available in a variety of sizes. In this connection, it is noted that square pizzas are already available. If the tray is square, a pair of spokes could be provided extending between the middle of the sides of the tray. With such a tray, the inner rim would merely be the area of intersection of the spokes. If desired to ensure even more efficient heating or cooking of the bottom surface of the pizza, small holes can be provided in the rims and/or the spokes. The primary objective is to ensure complete and uniform cooking of the pizza while providing ample support for the pizza before, during and after cooking.

THE EMBODIMENTS OF THE INVENTION IN WHICH AN EXCLUSIVE PROPERTY OR PRIVILEGE IS CLAIMED ARE DEFINED AS FOLLOWS:

1. A tray for use in pizza cooking comprising a circular, narrow, substantially planar outer rim defining the outer periphery of the tray; a circular, narrow, substantially planar inner rim completely within and spaced from said outer rim; narrow, substantially planar, straight spokes extending radially between and interconnecting said inner and outer rims, the outer and inner rims and spokes being in substantially the same plane, and having dimensions such that the tray is substantially open from top to bottom to facilitate cooking of the pizza bottom.

2. A tray according to claim 1, wherein said spokes are spaced equidistant apart in the area between said outer and inner rims.

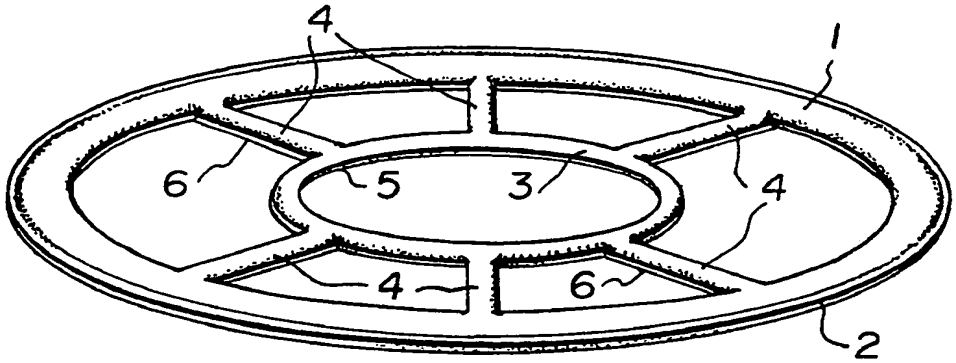

FIG. 1

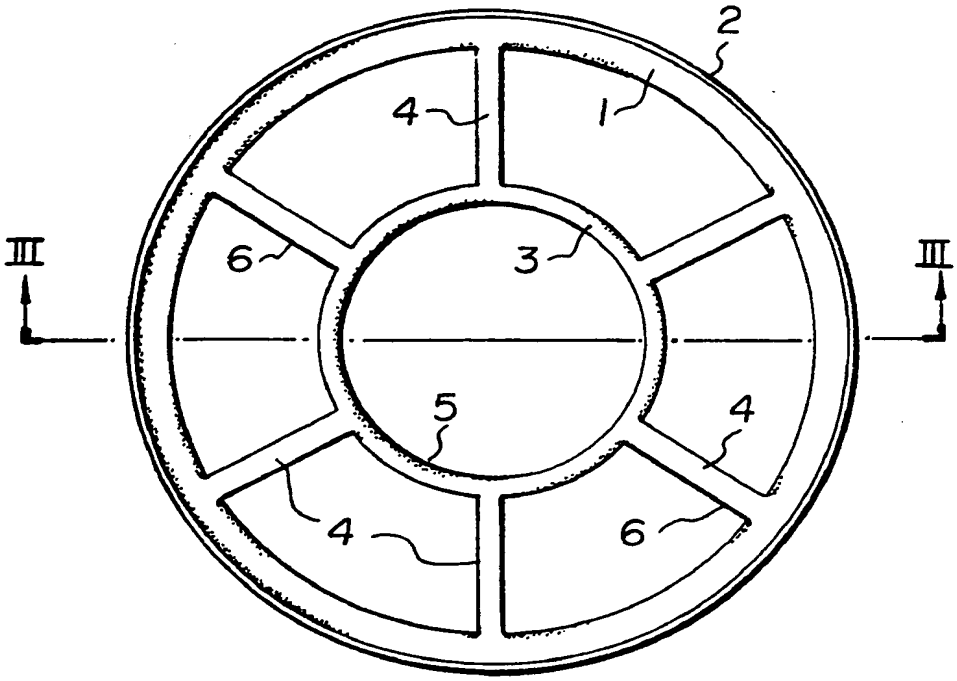

FIG. 2

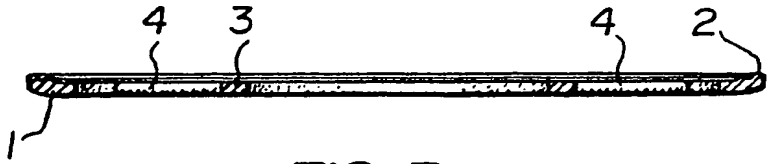

FIG. 3

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